

approach is in dealing with this problem. It is a problem in the City of Omaha. It's a problem that has been around since the beginning of time and finding the best possible solution has not always been the easiest job for governmental agencies. At the current time, the way we deal with it in this state is to fine that individual \$100. I don't know how effective that has been. We still have the problem and one approach that was talked about in committee is through educational programs, helping these individuals that are tragically forced to sell their bodies in order to have enough money to live on. I think education and helping these people through treatment programs is the best possible approach, but I don't think you're going to be able to force those individuals into programs to help themselves if you only have a \$100 fine. It's not going to be enough justification to force those people into these types of programs. And so for that reason I chose to support Senator Lindsay's bill in committee. Now this amendment that is being offered by Senator Chambers I think probably...probably just would, as Senator Lindsay said, would probably do away with the prosecution or prosecution of individuals arrested for prostitution. You have to have a party involved to testify against that individual. There has to be two people in order for this conviction of prostitution to occur. What this amendment would do would prohibit essentially all prosecutions by the City of Omaha either for prostitution or for pandering and I feel that individuals that are pimps, that are involved and encourage women or men to sell themselves should be prosecuted just as forcefully. Now as I recall, pandering or the act of pimping another individual is a felony, a Class IV felony. We view this as a very harsh crime and as a result we impose felony provisions on it. I have nothing but sympathy and compassion for individuals that are forced to sell themselves in order to raise money, but I feel that the only way we can help them is by increasing the penalty and putting these people into treatment programs. And for that reason I will not be supporting Senator Chambers' amendment and I will be supporting the bill onto Select File. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, although this is a subject that might be deemed low in a sense because of what we're dealing with, I think the debate has been on a high level and I'm going to keep it at that point, but I have a number of questions I have to ask Senator Lindsay.